

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 7-14, 18-21, 23-28, and 30-33 were pending in this application. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the allowance of claims 7-14, 28, and 30-32. Claims 20, 21, 25-27, and 33 have been amended. Claims 18, 19, 23, and 24 have been canceled and no claims have been added. Hence, claims 7-14, 20, 21, 25-28, and 30-33 are now pending. Reconsideration of the subject application as amended is respectfully requested.

Claim 24 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 25-27 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 18-21, 23, and 33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shang et al., (EP 0 697 467), in view of Littau et al. (WO 99/02754).

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 24 has been canceled herein, rendering moot the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

CLAIMS ALLOWED OR INDICATED AS ALLOWABLE

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the allowance of claims 7-14, 28, and 30-32.

Applicant further thanks the Examiner for the indicated allowance of claims 25-27 if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim (claim 23) and any intervening claims (none). Applicant has so rewritten claims 25-27, and thus claims 25-27 are in condition for allowance.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of independent claim 18 for at least the reasons previously provided, however, to expedite prosecution Applicant has canceled claim 18 for later filing in a Continuation or other related application. Dependent claim 19 has also been canceled without prejudice. Dependent claim 20 has been amended to depend from allowable independent claim 7 and thus claim 20 is in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 21 has been amended in a manner that includes similar limitations indicated as allowable in independent claim 7. For example, claim 21 provides a semiconductor equipment cleaning system comprising a gas delivery system to introduce, *inter alia*, a third gas comprising oxygen into the housing. The third gas bypasses the dissociator. Applicant respectfully asserts independent claim 21 is allowable for at least the reasons recognized by the Examiner for the allowance of claims 7-14.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of independent claim 23 for at least the reasons previously provided, however, to expedite prosecution, Applicant has canceled claims 23 and 24 without prejudice for later filing in a Continuation or other related application. Further, as noted above, dependent claims 25-27 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of independent claim 23. Claims 25-27 have been so rewritten and are in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 33 has been amended to provide that the computer readable program includes instructions for operating the semiconductor cleaning system in accordance with the following: delivering a first precursor gas comprising fluorine and a second precursor gas comprising chlorine into the remote dissociator. Applicant respectfully asserts independent claim 33 is allowable for at least the reasons recognized by the Examiner for the allowance of claim 25. Thus, claim 33 is in condition for allowance.

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PATENT

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 303-571-4000.

Respectfully submitted,



Roger T. Barrett
Reg. No. 41,599

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, Eighth Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: 303-571-4000
Fax: 303-571-4321

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